



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

ON THE ANCIENT HISTORY AND THE ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND.*

BY THE REV. EDWARD JOHNSTON, M.C.R.I.A. &c.

The study of antiquities is not necessarily dry or uninteresting, even to the general reader, though often rendered so by the natural dulness of writers on the subject. Most men are willing to look back occasionally into bygone ages, if they find that their mental eye can be taught to pierce the cloud that overhangs the past, and they gladly inquire and learn who were their forefathers, what were their manners and their mode of living, their progress in civilization, their words and their deeds.

The contrast between the changes that have lately taken place in public opinion, with respect to the early history of Ireland and Scotland, is extremely curious and striking.

The claims of the former country to a high degree of antiquity among the nations of the world, were passed by unnoticed, or mentioned only as a legitimate subject of scorn and derision, while those of the latter were pretty generally recognised and admitted; but the weight of evidence, and the prevailing quality of truth, have caused these to pass into contempt and oblivion, even while the assertions of the Irish antiquaries were strengthening into certainty and conviction, from the gradual but sure operation of the same causes.

The partisans of Irish antiquity had so generally confined themselves to vague declamation, or at best to general references to obscure authors, the very existence of whose works was in many cases doubted, that little, if any credit was given to their vaunting assertions. Of late years, however, the zeal, the learning, and the research of Dr. O'Connor, fostered by the munificence of the Duke of Buckingham, has given to the world a voluminous series of ancient documents, the most valuable and authentic that has ever yet contributed to throw light on ancient Irish history. The native records of ancient Ireland are now, for the first time, brought fairly before the tribunal of public opinion; nor need they fear to challenge accurate investigation. They profess to have been compiled for the most part by writers contemporary with the events which they relate, and who do not appear to have been interested in the fabrication of falsehood, or the suppression of truth. They consist chiefly, of naked annals of facts, with names, dates and places annexed, mixed up, indeed, occasionally with some few marvellous relations of prodigies, and other incredible matters, suited to the ignorance and credulity of the time, but these are easily distinguished and separated from the narratives which may with propriety be received as authentic. Tigernach, abbot of Cluan-mac-nois, in the eleventh century, and one of the most sensible and trust-worthy of the native annalists, pronounces all the records of the Scots (i. e. the Irish,) until the reign of Cimbaoth, of uncertain authority. Cimbaoth built the palace of Eamania, and reigned in Ulster, three centuries before the Christian era, and nearly four centuries after the time of Ollam-Fodla, famous in Irish story. Tigernach commences his invaluable chronicle, which is written partly in Latin and partly in native Irish,† thus:—"In the 18th year

* *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores veteres*. Nunc primum edidit C. O'Connor, S.T.D. 4 vols. 4to. Printed for the Duke of Buckingham. Buckingham, 1814—1826.

† The two languages are mixed up together very oddly, the same sentence being frequently written half in one and half in the other.

of Ptolemy,* Cimbaoth, son of Phintain, began to reign in Eamania; he reigned eighteen years. At that time Eachach Buadhach, (Eochadius Victor,) father of Uganias, reigned in Temoria (Tara,) the palace of the king of all Ireland. All the records of the Irish, (omnia monumenta Scotorum,) until the time of Cimbaoth were uncertain. At this time flourished Zeno the stoic, Menander the writer of comedies, and Theophrastus, the philosopher." This sweeping sentence against all which preceded the time of the first Ptolemy, is very grating to the ears of those who stickle for Ireland's extreme antiquity and splendour. No people of the world, except, perhaps, the Egyptians and Chinese, seek farther back for their origin than the Irish; and indeed, in no country of Gothic Europe, do the regular annals reach so high.† The custom of religiously preserving these, as well from the earliest period, as throughout the darkness of the middle ages, is proudly urged as a corroborative proof of their descent from the Phœnicians, to whom, in an especial manner, Josephus ascribes this habit which is peculiar to the Irish in the West of Europe.‡

It is not, however, here intended to sound our perilous way through the Cimmerian gulph, § or drag from their kindred obscurity the ballads and the legendary tales of bards, the fulsome adulations of Fileas, or the fabulous narratives of Senachies, who seem to think that the magnificent antiquity of Ireland hath, like the bay of Portugal, an unknown bottom. In every country with which we are acquainted, poets have been the first historians, and as the end of poetry has ever been to convey pleasure rather than to relate truth, we find the beginnings of every ancient nation involved in fable and contradiction, not only from the primary want of literary monuments, but also from the voluntary depravation of tradition. Nevertheless, the testimony of foreign writers to the remote antiquity of the original inhabitants of Ireland is not found wanting. Camden notes the mention of the island by Orpheus, by Aristotle and by Claudian.¶ Orpheus in his *Αγοραυστικά*, says of Jason, in the course of his voyage, *Παρ δ' ἀρχαὶ νησον ἀμειβεν Ἰερνίδα*. That Ireland was the island meant, is also expressly supported by primate Usher and by Bochart. It must be confessed, indeed, that the works in which mention is made of Ierna, are attributed to Orpheus and Aristotle on somewhat uncertain authority. Still their extreme antiquity, by whomsoever written, is unquestionable, and that is the point here at issue. Bochart maintains that it was through the Phœnicians, Orpheus and the Greeks knew Ireland by name, and so he accounts for their admitted ignorance of Great Britain at the same time. The story of the native Irish annalists is, that a colony from Scythia, descended from Magog, settled in Egypt; that from this a second colony was sent forth and settled on the coast of Spain, and finally a colony emigrated from this last and settled in Ireland.¶ It is certainly a curi-

* i. e. Ptolemæus Lagides.

† No nation can be found in any part of the world more observant of antiquity; none has transmitted, written, preserved the genealogies, achievements, the names, extraction, bounds of authority, and finally the whole history of their ancestors, more exactly than the Irish.—Ward, Dissert. Hist. page 271.

‡ Joseph. Cont. Apion.

§ Cimmerium tentare adytum: submersaque lethi
Sistere de barathro luci.

¶ Celeberrima insula vulgo Hibernia dicta, Orpheo, Aristoteli, et Claudiano Ierna.—Camden's Hibernia.

¶ Vide Sir Lawrence Parsons' (now Lord Rosse,) defence of the ancient History of Ireland.

ous coincidence, that Josephus, with whose writings these annalists could not possibly have been acquainted, informs us, that the colony which Magog established, was named by the strangers *Magogians* from its founder, but that they called themselves *Scythians*, (*Σκυθας*). * General Vallancey's support of the Phœnician origin of the Irish is well known. He endeavours to establish an identity between the language of a Carthaginian introduced in a comedy of Plautus, and the ancient language of Ireland.† The reader needs not to be informed that the Carthaginians were a Phœnician colony.

The broadly marked distinction, even now existing, between the inhabitants of Connaught, indeed of the whole western coast of Ireland, and those of Leinster, and the more inland districts of Munster, plainly indicate that they belong to different races. The light that has been thrown upon the subject of Irish antiquities in latter times, great as it undoubtedly is, has contributed little to dissipate the obscurity which still hangs over both the time at which Ireland was first peopled, and the race and country of the settlers. Whether they were Celts or Goths or Belgæ, whether they were a Scythian, a Phœnician, or a Milesian colony, and whether they came immediately from Gaul, from Britain, or from Spain, are questions yet undetermined. The surviving language of the native Irish is unquestionably Celtic to a great degree; but it is equally certain that it contains a considerable admixture of Gothic. The personal characteristics of a great portion of the inhabitants of the west and south-west, are abundantly indicative of their Celtic origin. The short and slender yet symmetrical form, the sallow skin, the small dark piercing eye, the thin lip, and the keen intellectual but somewhat sinister and melancholy cast of countenance, prove them to be Celts, as plainly as thick lips, woolly hair, and black complexion, detect the African. The Goth, on the contrary, is tall, robust, and ruddy, with large, well-opened, placid eye, contented look and light hair. From this race the inhabitants of Leinster, and the majority of the muscular men of Munster, are probably descended. It is not only natural, but almost necessary, that Ireland, in common with the whole of the West of Europe, should have been peopled by both these races. By the Celts originally, for they preceded the Goths in Europe, and have left their descendants and their language as proofs of their early colonization of Ireland; but whether they came from Phœnicia or from some other Oriental city, of which the remains, like those of Nineveh and Babylon, Troy and Carthage, have utterly perished, it is not for me to say. The Goths invaded Europe as conquerors, and drove the Celtæ every where before them. It has been the fashion to depreciate the Celts as an inferior race, because they sunk dismayed and heart-broken before the overwhelming force of the Gothic arms. That they were inferior in physical prowess is certain. Civilized intellectual men, are always inferior in mere animal courage, to fierce untamed barbarians; but why Pinkerton should have called the Celts "a savage people, incapable of improvement," is altogether unaccountable, save from the prejudiced views which so often characterise the descriptions of that very learned writer.‡

* Sir Lawrence Parsons' Defence.

† Bochart discovers Hebrew in the same speech: possibly neither is incorrect; the apparent discrepancy may be reconciled by referring both to a kindred or a common origin, probably the Assyrian.

‡ The Etrurians, the most polished people of antiquity, who taught the arts and sciences to the Greeks themselves, were undoubtedly Celts. As to the proofs of

It may be objected that if the Goths overcame and succeeded the Celts, they would have substituted their own language for the Celtic in the island. Experience proves that the reverse of this has ordinarily followed. Without going beyond the sister island, we may observe that in the successive conquests of Britain by the Romans and the Normans, neither Latin nor French ever became the language of the people of the British nation; at this hour, the Welsh and native Irish, retain mixed varieties of the Celtic tongue; as well, therefore, might it be maintained that they were never subject to the English, because they still retain a different language, as argued, that the Goths had never established extensive settlements in Ireland, from the alleged paucity of the remains of Scandinavian origin to be met with in the native Irish tongue.* The language of the people will prevail and continue though the foreign invader succeed in effecting a conquest over the territory; nay, though the conquerors ultimately become much the more numerous body of the nation, if they came over by tribes in detail, for then each horde is gradually amalgamated with the invaded nation, and the old language may thus almost survive the gradual extermination of the people by whom it was originally spoken.

We know, with sufficient certainty, that in Europe the tide of population flowed in a westerly direction, and would therefore naturally be slow in its advances to Ireland. It is universally admitted, that the commencement of population, art, and knowledge, took place in the East. In the tenth chapter of the book of Genesis, we are told concerning the posterity of Japheth, son of Noah, that "By these were the *isles of the Gentiles* divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." All the best and most ancient authorities are agreed, that by the isles of the Gentiles here mentioned, we are to understand the islands of Europe, among which Great Britain and Ireland, as the largest, must not be overlooked, though they probably were not peopled until the pleasant islands of the Mediterranean were overstocked with inhabitants, and sent forth swarms who traversed the continent, and ultimately reached this utmost corner of the West. In support of this hypothesis, we have the concurrent testimony of Josephus and of many of the ancient fathers, that the Gaulish Celts were descended from Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth. When the Celts entered Europe we know not; it was certainly at a period long antecedent to that to which authentic profane history reaches; but that the island of Erin was originally peopled by these Celts, or their descendants, is denoted, as has been said, both by the name, and by the language, though the time of the immigration be uncertain. Dr. Raymond, a most learned antiquary, and fellow of the university of Dublin, ascertained the Irish language to be, as he conceives, identical with that of the ancient Celtæ. Those who are incredulous as to the very remote antiquity of the colonization of Ireland by the Celts, think

early civilization in ancient Ireland, which Pinkerton and Dr. Ledwich have sneeringly demanded, the Irish antiquary might point to many ancient nations of acknowledged cultivation, no vestige of which now survives, were he not furnished with a more positive and triumphant answer, in the ancient monarchy of his country, and other civil institutions, the Brehon laws, poetry, music, and monumental remains, with the great extent, variety, and undoubted antiquity of which, we have only recently been made acquainted.

* I am prepared, however, to contend, that strong Gothic traces still linger in the language, though undoubtedly it is *chiefly* Celtic.

that it may have been peopled by Celtic emigrants from England.—Stillingfleet and Lhuyd are of opinion, that some of the Celts who had settled in Britain passed over into Ireland, in a very early age of the world, and that afterwards some of the Scythians, coming from Spain into Britain, and finding it already occupied, crossed over to Ireland, and subduing the first settlers took possession of the island. Camden, too, states, that the inhabitants were called *Scoti* quasi *Scythæ*, and similarly Thomas de Walsingham writes, "Therefore Scottes ben called, as it were Scites, for they came out of Scitia."*

Buchanan argues, from the reason of the thing, that the Gauls journeying in search of new territories, from their previous settlements along the Northern coast of Spain, would never have left the milder climate and more fertile soil of Ireland behind, and passed on to the less inviting shores of North Britain. Camden says expressly, *genunos Scotos ex Hibernis prognatos fuisse, ipsarum linguarum communitas facile evinceret*. Indeed it is acknowledged that Ireland was termed *Scotia Major*, as the parent, and *Scotia Minor*, as the offspring. Spencer concurs in the opinion that Ireland was originally planted with inhabitants out of Spain, but whether by Gauls or by Goths he does not undertake to determine. The favourite story of the bards, touching Milesius king of Spain, and his four sons, he treats, perhaps deservedly, with derision, as no more worthy of credit than Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of the conquest of Ireland by king Arthur, "at the yeere 525."

The Celts, the Goths and their Belgic descendants, all, perhaps, contributed to the peopling of Ireland. It seems not improbable, that the original occupation of the island having taken place in the manner already adverted to, when the barbarous hordes of the north swept over Europe, the Goths and their Belgic posterity may have subdued and resettled Ireland. The resemblance between the manners of the ancient Irish, and those of the Germans as described by Tacitus, is much too uniform and too minute to be satisfactorily accounted for, merely by the supposed similarity of their position in the progress of society. Most of the characteristics of the Irish, related by Giraldus Cambrensis, and by Spencer, may be traced with astonishing precision in the pages of the *essay de moribus Germanorum*. From Ptolemy's map of Ireland, laid down in the second century, according to information principally derived from Roman traders, it would seem that colonies from Gaul, from Germany, and from Spain, had then established settlements in the island: these, however, may have passed more immediately from Britain. Tacitus records that in his day, that is, towards the close of the first century, the harbours of Ireland were, by means of merchants and commerce, better known than those of Britain; yet so ignorant or so careless were these sea-faring persons, in their reports, that the Greek and Roman writers were all misled as to the relative situation of Ireland.

Tacitus himself places it *medio inter Britanniam atque Hispaniam*, and Strabo wanders still more widely from the truth. The greater accuracy of Ptolemy is ascribed by Hibernian writers, in some degree at least, to information received from Phœnician merchants.

Tacitus relates that Agricola, his father-in-law, had often assured him that a single legion, with a few auxiliaries, would suffice for the reduction of Ireland. Agricola formed his judgment chiefly on the

* Polychron, L. i.

statements of a native chieftain, who had been expelled domestic sedition, and he probably calculated much on the national imbecility which necessarily springs from internal disunion. Sir John Davis quaintly remarks upon the passage "We make no doubt that if Agricola had attempted the conquest thereof, with a far greater army, he would have found himself deceived in his conjecture." That Agricola, shrewd and able as he was, could sometimes deceive himself as to the strength and means of resistance of a native force, is abundantly evinced by the issue of his expedition against Caledonia, the principal profit he reaped from which, was the brilliant discovery that Great Britain was an island.

Previously to the introduction of christianity, the Druids* exercised that sway in Ireland, which intellect and education, joined to the sanctity of the sacerdotal character, could not fail to command among a rude and unlettered people.† The circumstances which led to the extinction of that order in Ireland are very imperfectly understood.‡ If we concur in the opinion of those who hold that miraculous interferences had ceased, before the fifth century, to be employed by Providence in the propagation of the christian religion, the progress of the missionary Succat, best known by his Roman name of Patric, who arrived A.D. 432, can be accounted for only by supposing that the true religion had been promulgated long before the arrival of Palladius, who preceded Patric only by a single year.

Indeed the celebrated words ascribed to Prosper, intimate that this was the case: "Palladius ordained a bishop by pope Cælestine, is sent to the Irish (Scoti) *who believed in Christ.*"§ Hence the opinion of primate Usher, who ascribes the introduction of christianity into Ireland to various pious missionaries of the fourth century, is rendered highly probable. The names of six of these missionaries are still preserved by tradition.¶ Ceallagh, an Irishman, became, about the year 400, a disciple of Morgan, a Welshman, better known by the name of Pelagius.

* Mr. D'Alton, I observe, following in the wake of Pinkerton and Vallancey, puts forward the opinion in his recent Essay, published for the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, that the ancient religion of Ireland was not Druidism, but a species of the Magism, or sun-worship, of the East, uncontaminated with the revolting rites which subsequently, as he conceives, polluted the worship of the Druids.

† Cæsar de bello Gallico l. vi. s. xii. informs us of the pains the Druids took to maintain their influence over the people. Fere de omnibus controversiis publicis ac privatis constituunt. Si quis aut privatus aut publicus eorum decreto non steterit, sacrificiis interdicunt. Hæc pœna apud eos est gravissima.

‡ Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of an inundation of the sea in the year 62, by which the native annals relate Lough Neagh to have been formed, adds "hujus autem eventus argumentum non est improbabile, quod piscatores aquæ illius, *turres ecclesiasticas* quæ more patriæ arcæ sunt et altæ, necnon et rotundæ, sub undis manifestò tempore conspiciunt, et extraneis transeuntibus reique causas admirantibus frequenter ostendunt—(Topog. Hib.) These seem to be the tall, narrow, round stone towers which have so long puzzled Irish antiquaries. From the reputed date of the inundation, however, these *turres ecclesiasticæ* must refer to a religion antecedent to christianity. Probably some form of Sabianism which enjoined fire-worship as the terrestrial symbol of the sun, and ordained the construction of the buildings in question for the preservation of the sacred element. But from the fanciful resemblances which boatmen on lakes are prone to discover to "passing strangers," the whole may possibly have been but a hallucination of their minds.

§ "Ad Scotos in christum credentes, ordinatus a papa Cælestino Palladius mittitur." The appellation Scoti was then, and for many centuries afterward, applied exclusively to the Irish.

¶ St. Diarmid, S. Liberius, Albeus, Declan, Ibar, and Ciaran.

St. Jerome speaks of this Ceallagh as the principal and most formidable spreader of the Pelagian heresy. Dr. O'Connor seems to think the missions of Palladius and Patric to Ireland, were more for the purpose of averting or eradicating the pestilential doctrine of Morgan, than of primarily planting the true religion; yet we are not to suppose that Ireland had been all at once turned from the errors of idolatry, even by St. Patric's preaching. In a battle between Lægarius, son of Nial, king of Ireland, and the inhabitants of Leinster, touching the tribute claimed from that province, the former, being defeated, swore by the sun, the wind, and the elements, to observe faithfully the concessions he then made. This was at least a quarter of a century after Patric's arrival. The historians of the transaction add, that having violated his oath, he was slain by these offended deities. Several centuries afterward incidental mention is made of a so-named druid having fled from the court of one of the Irish kings.

Archbishop Usher labours strenuously to prove that the primitive faith which was planted in Ireland, and for many centuries continued to flourish there, was nearly the same pure form of sound words which was subsequently established in Britain by the reformation. That the church of Ireland did broadly depart from the church of Rome, and openly contravene its authority in the observance of Easter, in the appointment of bishops, and in many other most important points of discipline, is established beyond all possibility of controversy.

With respect to doctrine, it is perhaps sufficient to observe, that many of the most unscriptural tenets of the roman catholic belief, crept into that church at periods long subsequent to the introduction of christianity into Ireland.

Mr. Hume, and other writers of some reputation, have represented the Irish as buried from the beginning of their existence, to the invasion of Henry II, in the profoundest ignorance and barbarism. It does not appear on what authority they have ventured so to represent them. That some of the inhabitants of Ireland had made considerable progress in religion, and in the arts of peace at least, if not of war, while the anglo-saxons were yet all immersed in the rudeness and recklessness of savage life, is placed beyond dispute by pregnant and unanswerable testimony.* The venerable Bede relates that Columb-cille came from Ireland (Scottia) into Britain in the year 565 to instruct the Picts, and built a monastery in the island of Hii, (Iona.) The Saxons were idolaters when St. Augustine arrived among them, A.D. 596; whereas Hanmer, Usher, and Stillingfleet concur in affirming that St. Brendan, who died A.D. 577, read public lectures on the liberal sciences at Rosscarbury, in Ireland; and so early as the fifth century St. Ibar founded a monastery in Beg Eire, off the coast of Wexford, in which monastery the natives were instructed in sacred literature, and in the sciences. From Bede, too, who describes Ireland as an island flowing with milk and honey, dives lactis et mellis insula, we learn that in the seventh century, the Saxon youth were sent into Ireland to be educated; and it became a common phrase, when any learned man was missed from his usual haunts, to say that he had retired into Ireland to pursue his studies.

From the fifth to the eighth century, was probably the period of Ireland's highest rank in literary eminence. From the eighth century,

* Vide Raymond, Usher, Warner, et instar omnium O'Connor rerum Hibernicarum, Scrip. vet.

to the coming of the English, the ravages of the Danes left no more than faint traces of her previous superiority.

Some writers affect to deplore that the Irish were not conquered and reduced to civility by the Roman arms. The Britons themselves, however, do not appear to have reaped any very enviable advantages from their acquaintance with those robbers of the world, as Galgacus styles them, who brought desolation, and called it peace.*

Every man who is familiar with the successive struggles of our ancestors, who from the first invasion of Cæsar, till the final subjugation by Agricola, fought and fell in defence of their liberty and their native land, must mourn over the dastardly spirit with which, in a few generations after, the Romanized descendants of these heroes, fled before the inroads of the Picts and Scots with womanish complaints. Their groans were ineffectual to attract the attention of a people writhing under the scourge of Attila's devastation, and they then became an easy prey to the valour of those Saxon barbarians whom they next invited to their assistance.

It is highly probable, that during the contests of the British with the Romans, and subsequently with the Picts, new immigrations of various tribes, both from south and north Britain, into Ireland, occasionally took place. Richard of Cirencester (*de Situ Brit. lib. ii. ad annum mundi 4052,*) writes, "about this time the Cangi and Brigantes leaving Britain, emigrated into Ireland, and there established a settlement." That the Gaill, or Irish, also made descents on Britain, recently before the arrival of the Saxons, we learn with certainty from the abbot Gildas, a reputable author of the sixth century, who writes, that in the middle of the preceding century (451,) the impudent Irish spoliators being at length defeated by the Britons, departed home, with the intention, however, of returning ere long to repeat their invasion.†

Subsequently too, it appears that the Picts, finding themselves unable to withstand the superior discipline and arms of the Saxon troops, invited over new bands from the north-east coast of Ireland, to be their auxiliaries in war. These settled principally in Argyle‡ and Arran, and the western isles of Scotland, which were thence called Ierna and Erin. Many of the Scottish lowlanders still look upon the western highlanders as the same people with the Irish. The similarity of their language is well known. It is so complete, that in the Irish insurrection of 1798, the plans of the rebels were frequently discovered and

* *Raptores orbis, &c.*—*Tac. Vit. Agric.*

† As the passage affords a lively, though perhaps prejudiced view of the condition of the Irish and British communities in the fifth century, the reader may desire to see it at length; it ought to be premised that Caradoc of Lhancarvan gives the following testimony to the capability of the author, at least to his opportunity of knowing the people of whom he speaks:—"Gildas Britonum Historiographus, tunc remanens in Hiberniâ, studium regens et prædicans in civitate Ardmachâ." The passage alluded to, is as follows:—"Itaque illis ad sua revertentibus, emergunt certatim de curicis quibus sunt trans Tithicam (qu. Scythicam) vallem vecti, quasi in alto Titane, incalentesque caumate, de arctissimis foraminum cavernulis, fuscî vermiculorum cunei tetri Scotorum Pictorumque greges, moribus ex parte dissidentes, et unâ eâdemque sanguinis fundendi aviditate concordēs, furciferosque magis vultus pilis quam corporum pudenda pudendisque proxima vestibus tegentes, cognitâque condebitorum reversione, et redivitū degeneratione, solito confidentius, omnem aquilonarem extremamque terrâ partem, pro indigenis murotenus capessunt." On their final repulse he adds, in a similar strain of exasperation, the prophecy of evil given in the text.

‡ Compounded of the words Ard and Gaill; the hills of the Gaill or Irish.

defeated by Scottish highlanders, before whom they conversed in their native language, without any suspicion of being understood.

The annals of Tigernach record (circ. ann. 502,) that Fergus Moí Mac Eirk cum gente Dabriada, (doubtless the *Dabrieta* of Nennius,) partem Britannia tenuit, et ibi mortuus est. The venerable Bede, himself an Anglo-Saxon, informs us, that after the British and Picts, Britain received a third nation from Ireland; qui duce Reuda de Hiberniâ egressi usque hodie Datreudini vocantur.* Richard of Cirencester relates that, so early as the year of the world 4325, the Irish made a settlement in Britain, under the conduct of Turgesius their king.† The same author affirms that eighteen years before (A.M. 4307) the Irish offered to become tributary to Constantine the Great.‡ Eumenius too, speaks of Britain, even previously to Julius Cæsar's visit, as "Hibernis assueta hostibus."§

Though that early and continued independence of foreign domination, which Tacitus speaks of as so hateful in the sight of the Roman generals, and so likely to contaminate even Britain with the love of freedom, has necessarily deprived Ireland of those lights which the pride and industry of the conquerors threw upon the history of most other nations of Europe; though our records are clouded with obscurity, and minute research into our ancient story is often embarrassing and unsatisfactory, yet so much has recently been done to clear away the difficulties which for many centuries surrounded the subject, that little praise can now be claimed by the antiquarian essayist, beyond that of simplifying and elucidating the materials that are prepared to his hand. To throw some light upon the form of government, and the actual state of society in ancient Ireland, shall be the object of the next paper under this head, for it would be injudicious to weary the reader over-much at once, with a subject which, however treated, is necessarily less stimulating and attractive in its nature, than those which the readers of magazines are accustomed to expect. Dr. O'Connor's work, from which much of the information has been selected, is so voluminous and so important, that a brief analysis of its principal contents, and a slight sketch of the personal history of its learned and reverend author, (a roman-catholic priest, chaplain to the late marchioness of Buckingham, and librarian of Stowe,) who died immediately after its completion, may possibly furnish matter for a third, and not the least interesting of a series of papers on the ancient history of Ireland. The book is printed for the Duke of Buckingham, and cannot be had for money, so that information collected from, or communicated concerning it, may perhaps be deemed the more desirable, in that it is derived from sources not accessible to the public at large.

E. J.

* Eccles. Hist. l. i. c. i.

† "Ductu regis Tergusii in Britanniam transeant Scotti, ibique sedem figunt."—*De sit. Brit.*

‡ Constantinus, qui magnus postea dicitur.....in Britannia creatus imperator, cui sponte tributariam offert Hibernia.

§ Paneg. Vet.